

Opening Statement of The Honorable Brett Guthrie
Subcommittee on Health Markup

July 21, 2021

As Prepared for Delivery

Thank you, Chairman Pallone, for holding this markup.

Before us today we have several bills that address important issues. I want to thank the majority and minority committee staff for their hard work on these bills.

I am pleased to see H.R. 4032, the Open RAN Outreach Act, that I introduced with Reps. Allred, O'Halleran, and Hudson and H.R. 4369, the National Centers of Excellence in Advanced and Continuous Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Act, that I introduced with Chairman Pallone **are before us today**.

This advanced and continuous manufacturing bill will create partnerships between the FDA and universities to research and develop innovative, advanced manufacturing technologies. This bill is important as we work to ensure our drug supply chain does not depend too heavily on other countries, such as China.

Today's markup also includes bills to address substance use disorders after preliminary data from the CDC released last week showed record high overdose deaths. We lost an estimated 93,331 people in the U.S. to overdoses in 2020, which is the highest annual jump in at least three decades.

One of the driving factors for this surge in overdose deaths is fentanyl, which the CDC data showed played a role in more than 60% of overdose deaths.

Before us today we have H.R. 2364, the Synthetic Opioid Danger Awareness Act. This would direct the CDC and other federal agencies to conduct a public awareness campaign on the dangers of synthetic opioids. **We must do more than a public awareness campaign. Just the [El Paso Sector of the Border Patrol has confiscated 41 pounds](#) of fentanyl this fiscal year. With it only taking two milligrams to be lethal, by my math, that's enough to kill more than 9.3 million Americans. The current temporary scheduling of fentanyl analogues expires on October 22, 2021. We must permanently add fentanyl analogues to the DEA's schedule I of scheduled drugs.**

Today we are also examining several bills pertaining to vaccines. I support efforts to give every American the opportunity to be vaccinated for COVID-19 and other preventable diseases when a vaccination is recommended.

Lastly, we are examining the **Medicaid funding for the territories.** I am encouraged by this bipartisan agreement. However, we must still work together to ensure this bill and the others are paid for. I yield back.